1.3 If the disposal per Judge in the concerned High Court is below even the national average then instead of increasing the strength, the concerned High Court is required to take steps for improvement in the rate of disposal of cases. If the average disposal of concerned High Court is above the national average then increase in Judge strength is accordingly considered. The strength of Additional Judges is reviewed only if there is an increase in the arrears of the pending cases during the last 5 years and the disposal per Judge is above the national average.

Mining lease to obulapuram mining company

2831. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have given permission to Obulapuram Mining Company Pvt. Ltd to start mining lease to an extent of 68.5 hectares in survey No: 1 and 2 Siddapuram and Malapanagudi villages and in survey No: l/p of Obulapuram village of D. Hirehal MandaI, Ananthapur in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether Andhra Pradesh Government has shown favour to the Company, by recommending its application for grant of licence; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for rejecting the application?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY): (a) to (c) State Governments are the owners of minerals and grant mineral concessions. Prior approval of Central Government is required for grant of mineral concessions for the minerals specified in the First Schedule of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act): Two proposals had been received from State Government of Andhra Pradesh seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 5(1) of MMDR Act, 1957 for grant of mining lease for iron ore over an area of 68.50 hects. in Sy. Nos. 1 and 2 of Siddapuram and Malapanagudi villages and over an area of 39.481 hects. in Sy. No. l/P of Obulapuram village in D. Hirehal Mandal of district Anantapur in favour of M/s Obulapuram Mining Company Pvt. Ltd.. Both these proposals were examined as per the provisions of the MMDR Act, 1957 and the rules made thereunder, and prior approval of the Central Government on these proposals has been conveyed to the State Government on 25.5.2007.

Revival of Hindustan Copper Ltd.

2832. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state

(a) whether Government have evolved a revival package for the Hindustan Copper Ltd. (HCL); and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has on 26.7.2007 approved the proposal for financial restructuring of Hindustan Copper Limited as under–

(i) Conversion of non-plan loan amounting to Rs. 50.00 crore in to equity. (Rs. 25 crore each released in 2005-06 and in 2006-07).

(ii) Waiver of 7.5% non-cumulative redeemable preference share amounting to Rs. 180.73 crore and its adjustment against accumulated losses. Restructuring of capital through reduction of face value of equity share from Rs. 10 to Rs. 5 amounting to Rs. 382.21 crore and its adjustment against the accumulated losses.

(iii) Restoration of superannuation age to 60 years to preserve skills and provide a breathing time to the organization for formulation of proper succession plan.

(iv) Creation of post of Director (Mining) to drive the growth agenda in the mining domain.

Illegal mining in Jharkhand

2833. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of illegal mining projects exist in Jharkhand;

(b) whether Government carry out regular inspections to check such illegal mining;

(c) the action taken by the Jharkhand Government to stop these illegal mining activities during the last five years; and

(d) in what manners these culprits are punished?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY): (a) to (d) Some instances of illegal mining in Jharkhand have been brought to the notice of Central Government. However, as per Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, the State Governments have been empowered to curb illegal mining, transportation and storage of minerals, including conducting regular inspections to curb illegal mining. The Central Government has also directed State Governments to frame rules, constitute task forces at State/District level for preventing of illegal mining. As per information available with Indian Bureau of Mines, the State Government of Jharkhand, apart from constituting a Task Force to monitor and curb illegal mining, has been conducting inspections, seizing illegally mined ore and vehicles used for such purpose, lodging FIRs, filling court cases and levying fines on the culprits.

Identification of minority districts

2834. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to identify the districts in the country with more than 25 per cent minority population, to ensure flow of funds to these areas on priority;